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MISCELLANEOUS.

—49—

Essay on the National Debt.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

The common people do not work for pleasure generally, but from necessity. Cheapness of provisions makes them more idle; less work is then done, it is then more in demand, proportionally, and of course the price rises. Dearness of provisions obliges the manufacturer to work more days and more hours; thus more work is done than equals the usual demand; of course it becomes cheaper, and the manufactures in consequence.—FRANKLIN'S *Political Fragments*.

The favourite reproach which is made to the authors of the Revolution of 1688, is, that they commenced the funding system. As a reproach, however, peculiarly applicable to the government of England of that day, this censure is totally groundless. The system of borrowing and funding had been long before adopted both by Venice and Holland.

It is, indeed, a natural step, in the history of a free state, where commerce produces capital, and liberty establishes credit. Even the arbitrary monarchies of Europe have found means to borrow to a large extent. Austria has several times transacted large loans, and has been thus enabled to commit the most flagitious frauds on the creditors of the state. In England, Charles II. borrowed a large sum from the bankers, payable on the receipt of the taxes. When the taxes came in, he closed the door of the Exchequer, and refused to pay. The infamy of this swindling transaction was, in some measure, repaired in the reign of William III. when a large part, at least, of the sum owing was funded as stock in the national debt.

I shall not pursue any farther the defence of a measure rendered necessary by the pressure of the great war in which we were engaged, and borrowed from Venice, the wisest, and Holland, the freest state in Europe. It is important, however, to cast our eye over the history of the national debt, from this time, and to examine its immediate and remote effects.

The capital of the national debt, at the accession of George I., and when all the war-accounts may be supposed to have been settled, amounted to 54,000,000*l.*, the interest to 3,351,000*l.* Sir Robert Walpole instituted a sinking fund, on which great eulogiums were made, and of which great hopes were entertained. In 1739 the capital of the debt was 46,654,000*l.*, the interest 1,964,000*l.*, so that he diminished the interest about 1,400,000*l.* and the capital about 7,000,000*l.* The Spanish war, however, which commenced in 1739, increased the capital of the debt by 30,300,000*l.*, and the interest by 1,096,000*l.* The peace which followed diminished the capital by 3,700,000*l.*, and the interest by 664,000*l.* But in 1763, after the seven years' war, the national debt amounted to 146,000,000*l.*

From that time to the breaking out of the American war, the national debt was diminished by 10,739,000*l.*

At the close of the American war the national debt amounted to 257,000,000*l.*

The celebrated sinking fund of Mr. Pitt, established in 1786, reduced the national debt, during the peace by 4,751,000*l.*, and the interest by 143,000*l.*

On the 5th of January 1816, after the entire close of the war, the supplies of 1815 having been much more than sufficient

to cover the expences of the war of 100 days, the national debt amounted to 836,255,000*l.*

In five years from that time, that is, on the 5th of January 1821, the debt amounted to 856,393,000*l.* being an increase of 140,000*l.** During more than a year of this time a new sinking fund has been in operation, voted by Parliament to amount to 6,000,000*l.* a-year.

Such has been the alternate progress of national debt and sinking fund; the one advancing by giant steps, and the other, although much vaunted, never having, in the course a century, made half the progress that was made by the national debt in the single year 1815. He must be a sanguine man indeed, who expects the sinking fund to overtake his opponent.

Such being the state of the case, it is more than ever necessary to examine what this debt is, what are its effects on the prosperity of the country, and what is likely to be the ultimate result. This last inquiry is indeed one of great uncertainty. Causes the most unlooked-for may intervene, and entirely change the direction of political events.

The first operation of the national debt is as follows:—The minister borrows, we will say 300*l.*, of a merchant who has the money in his coffers. He engages to pay 15*l.* of interest. For this purpose he lays a tax of 5*l.* on a landed proprietor, another 5*l.* on a farmer, and another 5*l.* on a tradesman, all supposed for the present to have equal incomes, and to pay the tax equally. The first operation of the tax is generally the following. The farmer and tradesman add the tax to the price of their commodity. Thus the tradesman pays a part of the tax of the farmer, and the farmer part of that of the tradesman. A tax, it is evident, still remains upon the shoulders of each. The tradesman and farmer must therefore either work harder, and produce more of their own commodity, or they must retrench their expences, and buy less of the commodity of their neighbour. The first takes place in a flourishing condition of a community; and the second in a poor, weak, and exhausted state. It is by the continual efforts of men to produce more, and grow rich, that a country rises to prosperity; it is by the saving and narrowing of consumption and expence that a nation falls into decay.

There is another manner in which a tax is paid, that is still worse. It is by diminishing profits. Thus, if a tax of great amount had been laid on shoe-buckles, the sellers of that article unable to obtain the payment of the tax, would have been obliged to content themselves with less profit. The trade which is thus unequally taxed is soon abandoned.

We must not lose sight, however, either of the landed proprietor, or the stock-holder. The proprietor, it is evident, must pay, besides his own, a part of the tax of the farmer and the tradesman, and he has no means of repaying himself. For this reason the economists supposed that the proprietors of land paid all the taxes. But they may, if they please, retrench their consumption, and that too with much more ease than the tradesman; as a livery-servant is more easily parted with than an artisan.

The stock-holder, in the mean time, if he is a consumer, pays to the tradesman and the farmer part of the tax which is raised for his benefit. But he has greater facilities of avoiding expence than any other branch of the community.

*Accounts of the Funded and Unfunded Debt, presented to the House of Commons, Sess. 1821.

There can be little doubt that, for a certain time, a national debt is beneficial in its effects. It promotes a rapid circulation of money; it brings new capitalists into the market with more enterprise, and more invention than the old proprietors of land; it obliges the labourer to work harder, and at the same time produces new demands for labour. But when the national taxes have increased to a certain amount, these effects are nearly reversed. Prices are so prodigiously increased to the consumer, that all prudent men retrench both their consumption and their employment of labour. The greater proportion of the general income of the country is transferred from the hands of men who have the means of laying it out in agriculture or manufactures, into the hands of great merchants, whose capital overflows the market, and returns in the shape of mortgages. There is, at the same time, a great want, and a great abundance of money. Such are the effects of a great national debt upon individuals. But there is another view in which this debt is an unmixed evil. I mean as it impairs and exhausts the resources of the state. The expence of former wars render it at least difficult for a nation to raise taxes for its defence. So much of the rent of the landholder is taken from him, that the minister dares not ask for more, as it would be equivalent to the confiscation of the land itself.

Mr. Hume has speculated with great ingenuity on the consequence of the national debt arriving at this pitch. He supposes that one of three methods must be resorted to. The first is, that the scheme of some projector should be adopted, which could only tend to increase the confusion and dismay, and the nation would thus "die of the doctor." The next is a national bankruptcy; a plan that he seems to look upon with some approbation. The third, and last, is, that the nation would persevere in paying the full interest. He continues thus: "These two events, supposed above, are calamitous, but not the most calamitous. Thousands are thereby sacrificed to the supply of millions. But we are not without danger that the contrary event may take place, and that millions may be sacrificed for ever to the temporary safety of thousands. Our popular government, perhaps, will render it dangerous for any man to venture on so desperate an expedient as that of a voluntary bankruptcy. And though the House of Lords be altogether composed of proprietors of land, and the House of Commons chiefly; and consequently can neither of them be supposed to have great property in the funds; yet the connection of the members may be so great with the proprietors, as to render them more tenacious of public faith than prudence, policy, or even justice, strictly speaking, requires. . . . The balance of power in Europe, our grand-fathers, our fathers, and we, have all esteemed too unequal to be preserved without our attention and assistance. But our children, weary of the struggle, and fettered with incumbrances, may sit down secure, and see their neighbours oppressed and conquered; till at last they themselves and their creditors lie both at the mercy of the conqueror." The picture of things at home he draws in the following manner:—"No expedient remains for preventing or suppressing insurrections but mercenary armies; no expedient at all remains for resisting tyranny: elections are swayed by bribery and corruption alone: and the middle power between King and people being totally removed, a grievous despotism will prevail. The landholders, despised for their poverty, and hated for their oppressions, will be utterly unable to make any opposition to it."*

If we look to foreign nations, we shall see that Venice, after wars of glory, arrived, in the beginning of the last century, at that stage of decay of which Mr. Hume speaks. Her revenue was not sufficient to pay the interest of her debt. She suspended payment, but still was unable to support the expense of her government. It requires, however, more space than we have here, to examine the complicated causes of her downfall.

Holland was also borne down in her latter years by the weight of her debt. It is still enormous in proportion to her wealth and population.

France began the revolution with a debt she could not support. By a summary process in the middle of the war, she virtually abolished the greater part of it. No country, however, has yet been precisely in the situation of England. Commerce and credit are not confined to a spot, but run through every vein in her body. A national bankruptcy would give a sudden check to industry that it would not easily be restored. Very mistaken notions prevail with respect to the good effects which would follow from applying a sponge to the debt. Of these mistakes none is more evident nor more mischievous than the notion which many entertain and inculcate, that the labourer who receives 18s. a-week, of which ten are consumed by the taxes on beer, candles, &c. would, if all these taxes were taken off, receive the same 18s. and obtain more than twice as much for them. The real price of labour, it must be recollected, is regulated by the supply and demand. The money-price of course will vary with the money-price of the provisions, house-rent, clothes, candles, &c. which are required for the maintenance of the labourer. If the demand for labour remains the same, and by a reduction of taxes the articles which the labourer uses are reduced in price from 18s. to 8s. his wages will fall from 18s. to 8s. But it will be said that the farmer and manufacturer, having more capital to lay out on labour, the reduction of taxes will bring an increased demand. This, indeed, may ultimately be the case; but it is not likely that such effect would follow a sudden stoppage of the payment of the dividends. So many consumers are spread over this country, who derive their income, either directly or indirectly, from the funds, that the first effect of a national bankruptcy would be a great diminution of demand, and a general depreciation of agricultural and manufactured produce throughout the country.

Since the approach of peace, this country has been visited, at two periods, by severe distress. The first began in 1813, when speculators in foreign corn brought grain, raised, perhaps for 20s. some say for 12s. a quarter, in Poland, to cope in the English market, with the English farmer, whose taxes and outgoings made it necessary for him to secure 80s. a quarter. The English farmer, of course, was brought to the brink of ruin; and, had not the legislature interfered and forbid all importation till the price rose to 80s. agriculture must have been nearly abandoned in this country. The mischief was not perceived in time by the government, and years of severe distress, which affected manufactures as well as agriculture, ensued.

The second period of distress is, perhaps, entirely to be attributed to the change which took place in the value of the currency, towards the end of the war. About the year 1807, the taxation of this country was at the highest. From this period, the pressure of the war was supported chiefly by the issue of an excessive quantity of bank paper, the holders of which could not demand the payment of the note in specie. The paper fell in value, step by step, till the depreciation amounted to about 30 per cent.

During this period of depreciation, the debt of the country was increased by above 300,000,000*l*. The expenditure of 1813 alone caused an addition to our debt of 77,000,000*l*., and that of 1815 another of 65,000,000*l*. The burden of the interest of these loans was not much felt during the war, as (besides appropriating great part of the sinking fund to pay the interest) the weight of taxes was, in fact, diminished by the alteration of the value of the currency, and the vast expenditure of capital which took place, caused trade and agriculture to flourish. The new money created by the Bank produced new speculators and new customers in every branch of industry, thus raising the price of all produce, and causing an apparent prosperity throughout the country.* But when, by the operation of various causes, and at length by positive statute, the currency was reduced to its original value, all these agreeable symptoms disappeared. The merchant or speculator, not receiving money from the Bank of England, is unable to purchase the produce of the farm. The farmer, at the same time, is obliged to sell at low prices, to pay the country banker

* Hume's Essays, Essay on Public Credit.

* See Hume's Essay on Money.

the money which he had borrowed to enable him to improve his land, and meet the increased demand of the war. Corn falls in value far below the price which the change in the value of the currency would indicate. The market is overstocked with labourers, created by the former demand and the injudicious administration of the poor-laws. They become a burden upon society, and form a body of unproductive labourers, many times more numerous than the army and navy of the highest war-establishment. The nation, to use a homely comparison, is like a man reduced by fever from a state of robust health, whose clothes are too large for his weakened and attenuated frame.

After the peace, 18,000,000*l.* of taxes were abolished. This was a diminution of 25 per cent. on the whole taxes, but at the same time the currency was increased in value 36 per cent. so that no relief was obtained. Not long afterwards, 3,000,000*l.* of new taxes were laid on; so that we have now more taxes than ever. The 300,000,000*l.* raised in depreciated money, is to be paid in good currency; that is to say, about 70,000,000*l.* at the least more than we have borrowed; or, in other words, we pay more than, 3,000,000*l.* a-year for money that we have never had.

In order to avoid this evil, Lord Lauderdale recommended, in 1814, that we should coin guineas of the value of 2*l.* of paper-currency. Had this advice been adopted, we should have avoided the misery that we have since suffered, and that, too, as we see, with a very small breach of the national faith.

Perhaps, indeed, the fundholder would have had reason to bless the day on which such a measure was adopted, for it would have retarded the period which, some time or other, will, in all probability, arrive,—when the payment of the full dividend and the safety of the state shall be found to be incompatible.

Our only consolation for not having adopted, or not adopting, this course, is, that the country gives an example of scrupulous faith, and unbending honesty, rare at all times amongst nations, but most so in our own times and among the nations of Europe.

Russian Army.—The Russian army on the frontiers of Turkey is said to be quite discontented at being detained within the Russian territories. This is what we anticipated. Even if Alexander should shew a willingness to renounce the system on which the Russian Cabinet has so long acted, the current of national feeling cannot all at once receive a new direction. Religion and patriotism both concur in stimulating the Russian soldier. Turkey is pointed out as his prize in many of the most popular works, and the idea has taken fast hold of the minds of the people. When to this is added the feeling in favour of their Church which they now see outraged, we may easily conceive the ardour with which the soldiery desire to advance to Constantinople. We do not suppose that Alexander has for one moment lost sight of the policy which actuated his predecessors; but even if he had renounced this policy, he could not act on his determination. He is no doubt an Autocrat; but the most absolute Autocrat that ever lived must be controuled in many things by the instruments to which he is indebted for his sway. The Janizaries and the Russian Guard; as well as the Prætorian Guards of Imperial Rome, have shown on many occasions how much they were aware of their own importance.—*Morning Chronicle.*

Ypsilanti.—An article from Cronstadt, dated May 24, says, Every one agrees that Ypsilanti possesses the qualities necessary for the Chief of his daring enterprise, and that he knows, particularly, how to animate others with his own courage and intrepidity. When the thundering Declaration of the Russian Consul, published at Jassy on the part of his Sovereign, and which produced so great an effect in Moldavia, arrived at his head-quarters, he ordered it to be read before the whole army.—He afterwards addressed the army, in which he said none of the Sovereigns would dare to march against them. But supposing that possible, he was certain no soldier present would survive the disgrace of his country. "If there are such," continued he, "let them pass to the left." The whole army passed to the right, shouting "Death rather than such an outrage."—*Star.*

Sinking Fund.—We suspect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Sinking Fund will be grievously curtailed and cloven down before it reaches its destination—if, indeed, it does not vanish altogether. The very first cut reduces it by a half, to provide for the two millions of debt from Government to the East India Company. The next takes off the solid fragment of half a million for Greenwich Hospital. The abandonment of the Agricultural Horse Tax removes another half million. The grant of 30,000*l.* to the Duke of Clarence, not contemplated in the Ways and Means, comes in next for its share—and the Fund of four millions, after undergoing this process of subtraction, is reduced to the diminutive shape of something below one million. But if Lord Milton succeeds in the repeal of the Wool Tax, and if, as it is most probable, other means of revenue should obtrude themselves with equal claims to be repealed, for the relief either of the manufacturing interest or of the agricultural, what becomes of this solitary sum, not quite a million? It vanishes from the eyes of all the world—or figures only in the Right Hon. Gentleman's imagination, and calculations for the year.—*Morning Herald.*

Grand Masked Festival.—The "Grand Masked Festival" in honour of Waterloo at Drury-lane theatre on Monday night, (June 18) though numerous attended, went off flatly. The evening commenced with a very wretched Ode, written "for the occasion," (suitable at least!), and the dramatic performances, which were very long, were finally put an end to by the hisses of the audience.—The same evening, there was a more appropriate celebration of the fatal day in Tothill-street, Westminster, where a party of soldiers, getting drunk, had a desperate quarrel; and the populace joining, a very bloody and scandalous affray ensued, in which many were wounded and some killed.—*Sun.*

The Author of the Tales of My Landlord.—In the sixth number of the new series of the *Kaleidoscope*, an article appeared, the tendency of which is to show that Sir WALTER SCOTT is not the author of Waverley, and the other admirable novels, usually ascribed to him. In the last number of the *Kaleidoscope*, there appeared a second article on the same subject, taken from the *Champion*, one of whose correspondents not only questions Sir Walter's title to the honours which have been so generally accorded to him; but states without hesitation, that the real author is Dr. GREENFIELD, a gentleman, eminent in the Church and in the Republic of Letters, having been a colleague with the late Dr. BLAIR, in the High Church of Edinburgh. It is added, that the Doctor left Edinburgh about twenty-two years ago, and has resided ever since in retirement. We have heard the Scotch novels, as they are called, attributed to this gentleman at least eighteen months ago.—*Liverpool Mercury.*

Red Egg.—A few weeks ago, at Ainsdale, a duck layed an entirely red egg, which being a phenomenon never before heard of, it was broken, and in it was found part of a pig's liver! in as perfect a state as when swallowed.—The duck was observed to swallow the liver a few days previous.—*Ibid.*

Duke of Clarence.—The decision by which eighteen thousand pounds have been given to the Duke of CLARENCE, his Royal Highness likewise enjoying from this time 2500*l.* per annum upon the civil list more than his other brothers, is one which will inspire universal regret throughout the country. Had the sum been claimed next year, we suppose it would not have been then granted consistently with Mr. BANKES's resolution to begin the system of frugality in 1822. The interval may be allowed as the winding up of the era of extravagance. We are sorry for it: and if it be observed, to the honour of the House of Commons, that only 54 members voted for the grant, and of those probably the greater number pensioners themselves, the country, we think, has a right to ask why only 24 were present to vote against it. Lord LONDONDERRY might well say that his strength resulted from the conduct of his adversaries. Our belief also is, that the grant will do the Duke of CLARENCE no good: it is a loss to the public of one of those little sums "which mean nothing," "which are not worth saving," &c. &c., but the aggregate of which amounts to upwards of four millions.—*Times.*

Regeneration of Society.

*Report to the County of Lanark, of a Plan for Relieving Public Distress, &c.
By Robert Owen.—Glasgow, 1821.*

The name of Mr. Owen, it has been very generally said, is connected alike with practical benevolence and speculative folly. There are few men, indeed, who have done more, within the narrow sphere of a private establishment, to better the condition of the working classes; and no man alive, certainly, who has dared to promise so much, not only for the melioration, but the absolute perfection of society. He is a sanguine indomitable enthusiast, whom neglect cannot discourage, nor repulse disconcert—and with the most extraordinary views upon subjects that are intimately connected with our social existence, he exceeds in confidence, we think, any Utopian who has ever ventured to trouble society with his reveries. He has of late years been visiting various parts of the world in quest of an audience to listen to the development of his plans, but, with some slight countenance, which the novelty and daring of his views could not fail to ensure, and which is seldom denied to even humbler pretensions, the result of deliberate consideration has hitherto been decidedly unfavourable to him. We all recollect the issue of that meeting of persons whom a few years ago he succeeded in bringing together in London. They stared at his wonderful propositions when first expounded to them, but afterwards dispersed in utter mockery and derision of his favourite plan for regenerating the species. The distress which has lately prevailed in the county of Lanark, and the annoyance which the tumults of the discontented have occasioned to the more intelligent and opulent classes there, have once more given this benevolent individual an opening, which, we believe, nothing short of despair could have afforded to his projects; and the apparent countenance which his plan for relieving public distress has thus received in a quarter so respectable, will probably be considered by our readers as entitling it to an examination, which upon its own merits, and especially after such an exhibition as that now alluded to, it might never have obtained from us.

The Report before us is a published work; nay, it has been industriously circulated, as we learn, among our leading statesmen, and dispatched to our ambassadors at foreign courts. It is addressed to the county of Lanark; but the principles embrace all Europe, and indeed all mankind.—The gentlemen of the county of Lanark were induced, we observe by their minutes, to appoint a committee to inquire into Mr. Owen's plans; and that indefatigable person, when called upon for explanation, laid before them this voluminous document, which consists of 66 printed pages in 4to. The report of the committee is appended to it; but it is very brief and vague, and merely refers the meeting to Mr. Owen's elaborate communication, which was to be perused, digested, and finally decided upon at a subsequent meeting of the county.

Mr. Owen's report consists of three parts: an "Introduction;" the "Outlines of the Plan;" and the "Details of the Plan." It must be remarked, however, that this is no ordinary plan, but one which, if the description that is given of it in the title-page be correct, well merits all this ceremony of introduction. It is described to be "a plan for relieving public distress, and removing discontent, by giving permanent productive employment to the poor and working classes, under arrangements which will essentially improve their character and ameliorate their condition, diminish the expenses of production and consumption, and create markets co-extensive with production." This is pretty well as a mere sketch of Mr. Owen's pretensions; but it is far indeed, as will be seen afterwards, from giving any thing like an accurate view of the resources of his genius. Before his novel and creative arrangements, poverty, vice, and misery are to disappear from the face of our earth, which they have so long deformed, and man is to walk erect in the full majesty of intellect, benevolence, and wisdom.

Mr. Owen, as the basis of his plan, has made the five interesting discoveries which follow, on the subject of *manual labour*.

1st, That manual labour, properly directed, is the source of all wealth, and of national prosperity.

2d, That, when properly directed, labour is of far more value to the community than the expence necessary to maintain the labourer in considerable comfort.

3d, That manual labour, properly directed, may be made to continue of this value in all parts of the world, under any supposable increase of its population, for many centuries to come.

4th, That under a proper direction of manual labour, Great Britain and its dependencies may be made to support an incalculable increase of population, most advantageously for all its inhabitants.

5th, That, when manual labour shall be so directed, it will be found that population cannot, for many years, be stimulated to advance as rapidly as society might be benefited by its increase."

These considerations convinced him, it seems, that some unnatural obstruction existed to the progress of society. He discovered, farther, that the power of machinery in Great Britain is as 40 to 1, and may ea-

sily be made as 100 to 1, to that of manual labour—which manual labour thus becomes, after all, a comparatively unimportant element in the national prosperity. But machinery has in fact swallowed up and fairly superseded manual labour—and "society has neglected to make the proper arrangements for the advantageous employment of the new productive power." But that such arrangements are practicable, Mr. Owen has no less than four grounds for believing; which are as follows:

"1st, It must be admitted that scientific, or artificial aid to man, increases his productive powers, his natural wants remaining the same; and, in proportion as his productive powers increase, he becomes less dependent on his physical strength, and the many contingencies connected with it.

2d, That the direct effect of every addition to scientific, or mechanical and chemical power, is to increase wealth; and it is found, accordingly, that the immediate cause of the present want of employment for the working classes, is an excess of production of all kinds of wealth, by which, under the existing arrangements of commerce, all the markets of the world are overstocked.

3d, That, could markets be found, an incalculable addition might yet be made to the wealth of society, as is most evident from the number of persons who seek employment, and the far greater number who, from ignorance, are inefficiently employed, but still more from the means we possess of increasing, to an unlimited extent, our scientific powers of production.

4th, That the deficiency of employment for the working classes cannot proceed from a want of wealth, or of the means of greatly adding to that which now exists, but from some defect in the mode of distributing this extraordinary addition of a new wealth throughout society, or, to speak commercially, from the want of a market co-extensive with the means of production."

Effective means must therefore be devised to facilitate the distribution of wealth; and although "mankind are naturally averse to the commencement of any material alteration in long established practices," yet Mr. Owen, "undismayed by any opposition which he may excite, is determined to perform his duty." The first part of this duty is to denounce the precious metals as a standard of value, which he says, have "altered the intrinsic values of all things into artificial values—and for this offence are," as he quaintly remarks, "justly entitled to be called 'the root of all evil.'"—Gold, indeed, was in 1797 found so unfit to represent British values, that, according to Mr. Owen's account of the matter, the legislature formally declared its incapacity, substituted Bank of England notes in its stead, and established a wise and excellent system, the sudden departure from which has materially contributed to our present distress.—But a standard of some kind we must plainly have, and therefore Mr. Owen well observes, that "the meeting may now justly ask of the Reporter, What remedy he has to offer? and what standard of value he proposes to substitute for gold and silver?" He prefaces his answer to this natural and important question by remarking, that "to understand the subject on which your Reporter is now about to enter, requires much profound study of the whole circle of political economy;" and adds, that "after deeply studying these subjects, practically and theoretically, for a period exceeding 30 years, and during which his practice, without a single exception, has confirmed the theory which practice first suggested, he now ventures to state, as one of the results of his study and experience, that the natural standard of value is in principle human labour, or the combined manual and mental powers of man called into action; and that it would be highly beneficial, and has now become absolutely necessary, to reduce this principle into immediate practice."—The trifling objection as to the difficulty of ascertaining, for practical purposes, the quantum and the quality of the human labour entering into each product of human industry, is ingeniously got over by reminding us that the average physical power of any given number of men, as well as of any given number of horses, has already been calculated for mechanical purposes,—and why not for the purpose of buying and selling commodities?

We shall just remark, in passing, how great must be the claim of that man to regard as a political economist, who has discovered that the legislature in 1797 suspended cash payments, on account not of the scarcity, but of the *unfitness* of gold to serve as a standard of value; and who announces it as a discovery made after deep meditation that human labour is in principle the natural standard of value,—the said principle having been long since illustrated by Adam Smith, although that commonplace writer left it to the more inventive genius of some future projector to make it supersede the use of the precious metals,—just as if the power of gravitation were invoked to supersede the vulgar mechanical instruments now employed for the purposes of trade, upon the ground that such instruments often give not the intrinsic but an artificial, and it may often be, a false and fraudulent weight.

But to proceed. The first thing to be done, it seems, is to revive the suspension of cash payments; the next, "to permit the labouring unoccupied poor to be employed to raise their own subsistence."—"But the industry of the poor," it is justly added, "thus applied, will tend

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still further to overstock the markets of the world with agricultural and manufactured produce;" and as it is the want of a profitable market that alone checks the successful and otherwise beneficial industry of the working classes," this sound and perspicuous Reporter strains all the energies of his genius to devise a remedy for so deep and radical an evil.

The reader will be surprised when he learns what this remedy is; but we must give it in the author's own words. "New arrangements, says he, become necessary, by which *consumption* may be made to keep pace with *production*; and the following are recommended. 1st, To cultivate the soil with the spade instead of the plough. 2d, To make such changes as the spade cultivation requires, to render it easy and profitable to individuals, and beneficial to the country. 3d, To adopt a standard of value, by means of which the exchange of the products of labour may proceed without check or limit, until wealth shall become so abundant, that any further increase to it will be considered useless, and will not be desired."—This last blessed consummation is to be reached it seems by the simple substitution of the spade for the plough, and of some new standard of value for gold and silver!

On the virtues of the spade as an instrument of husbandry the author is very full and eloquent. "It is evident," he concludes, that the plough conceals from the eye its own imperfections, and deceives its employers, being in truth a mere *surface implement* and extremely defective in principle; that the spade, on the contrary, makes a good sub-soil, as well as a superior surface, and the longer it is used in the same soil the more easily will it be worked; and by occasional transitions, where there is sufficient depth of soil, new earth will be brought into action, and the benefit to be derived from a well prepared sub-soil will be increased. But then the working of the plough is in a given time so much more powerful and effective than that of the spade, that maxims of economy may demand the continuance of it notwithstanding its admitted defects; and Mr. Owen admits, that "all this is plausible, and is sanctioned by the old prejudices of the world." He is prepared, however, with an answer furnished by his correspondent Mr. Falla, of Newcastle, who attests, that by an additional outlay of about 5s. per acre in an experiment of spade husbandry, he realized a profit of more than twelve pounds Sterling, as compared with the results of the ordinary mode of cultivation by the plough: And the reason that the spade has not been long ago generally substituted for the plough is, that farmers have been mere bores; or in the words of Mr. Owen, have generally been more trained to be tenacious of old established practices, till their ideas have been confined within a very narrow range." "The natural use of their senses has indeed taught them some little knowledge of breeding and rearing of sheep and oxen, and the general management of the inferior *domestic animals*; but," as Mr. Owen remarks, they "can better direct the employment of 10 horses than of 10 men," because the latter occupation "implies a knowledge of human nature in all respects," while the cultivators of the soil have hitherto been intelligent only in the nature and properties of brutes. Mr. Owen, however, assures us that the extraordinary change, which he recommends, is at hand, "and will immediately take place," so that the agriculturists had better begin their studies of human nature without loss of time.

Mr. Owen calculates that there are 60 millions of acres under cultivation in Great Britain, 20 millions arable, and 40 in pasture; that 2 millions of labourers are actually employed upon the ground, who immediately support about three times as many as their own numbers, and raise food for a population of 18 millions. But 60 millions of acres cultivated by the spade, would along with manufactures, employ 60 millions of men and women, and subsist in great comfort a population of more than 100 millions: so that in the present low state of the population of these islands, not more than 4 or 5 millions of acres could be cultivated by the spade; And as Mr. Owen remarks, it follows from this statement, that we possess the means of supplying the labouring poor, however numerous they may be, with permanent beneficial employment for many centuries to come." Mr. Owen has thus with his spade dug a grave for the theory of Mr. Malthus.

"The next consideration," the author proceeds, "which demands our attention is,—what constitutes a proper system of spade husbandry? or, in other words, how these new cultivators can be placed on the soil, and associated, that their exertions may have the most beneficial result for themselves and the community?

The leading principle which should direct us in the outline of this arrangement, and from which there should be no deviation in any of its parts, is the public good, or the general interest of the whole population. To this end, the following considerations must be combined.

1st, Where, in general, can the labourers be best placed for the spade cultivation?

2d, What is the quantity of land which it may be the most advantageous to cultivate, *in cumulo*, by the spade?

3d, What number of workmen can be the most beneficially employed together, with a view to all the objects of their labour?

4th, What are the best arrangements under which these men and their families can be well and economically lodged, fed, clothed, trained, educated, employed, and governed?

5th, What is the best mode of disposing of the surplus produce to be thus created by their labour?

6th, What are the means best calculated to render the conduct and industry of these workmen beneficial to their neighbours, to their country, and to foreign nations?

The results of these new arrangements will of course surpass all possible anticipation; and preparation must be made for distribution and exchange. "These incalculably increased products will render gold, the old artificial standard of value, far more unfit for the task which is to be performed than it was in 1797, when it ceased to be the British legal standard of value, or than it is now, when wealth has so much increased;" and the author, therefore, "is of opinion, that the natural standard of human labour, fixed to represent its natural worth or power of creating new wealth, will alone be found adequate to the purposes required."—But how to render this standard a practical one is the difficulty. Mr. Owen's plan, so far as we can understand it, is indeed a curious one. He proposes, first of all, to find the average value of labour by the day, which he constitutes the *unit*; and he remarks, that "a slight and general view of the subject is sufficient to shew that this unit need not represent a less value than the wealth contained in the necessities and comforts of life, which may now be purchased with five shillings." You are then accurately to ascertain how many of these units may be represented by the various commodities which are to be exchanged against each other,—a task of some difficulty, and which Mr. Owen, therefore, judiciously declines! We are assured, however, upon the whole, that "this substantial improvement in the progress of society may be easily effected, by exchanging all articles with each other at their prime cost, or with reference to the amount of labour in each, which can be equitably ascertained, and by permitting the exchange to be made through a convenient medium to represent this value, and which will thus represent a real and unchanging value, and be issued only as substantial wealth increases."—From Mr. Owen's avowed antipathy to every existing medium of exchange, we had supposed that his plan was to dispense with a medium altogether, and to bring forward at once the *ipsa corpora* of the commodities to be exchanged, after the example of Swift's noted proposal for abridging the fatigue of speech, by carrying about and exhibiting the subjects of discourse, or the things to be spoken about, in all their bulky realities. But Mr. Owen still requires, it seems, a medium of exchange, although it is to be made representative of real and unchanging value,—that is, of labour alone. Now this is just what every medium of exchange since the beginning of the world was intended to represent, and towards which all exchanges naturally gravitate; but without some universal system of compulsion, we do not see how its practical fluctuations are to be prevented. Are the members of Mr. Owen's new community to be compelled, in all instances, to proportion their payments to the number of units contained in the commodities offered for sale, even supposing these capable of exact enumeration; or are they to have an option of declining altogether to purchase? If they are to have this option, trade will just go on as it has always done; and the principles of supply and demand will continue to govern it in spite of Mr. Owen's "real unchanging values."—It is evident, indeed, from his remarks, that to bring his system into operation, some great moral change among men is indispensable.

"The genuine principle of barter was, to exchange the supposed prime cost of or value of labour, in one article, against the prime cost of, or amount of labour contained in any other article. This is the only equitable principle of exchange; but, as inventions increased, and human desires multiplied it was found to be inconvenient in practice. Barter was succeeded by commerce, the principle of which is, to produce or procure every article at the lowest, and to obtain for it in exchange, the highest amount of labour. To effect this, an artificial standard of value was necessary; and metals were, by common consent among nations, permitted to perform the office. This principle, in the progress of its operation, has been productive of important advantages, and of very great evils; but, like barter, it has been suited to a certain stage of society. It has stimulated invention; it has given industry and talent to the human character, and secured, the future exertion of those energies which otherwise might have remained dormant and unknown. But it has made man ignorantly, individually selfish; placed him in opposition to his fellows; engendered fraud and deceit; blindly urged him forward to create, but deprived him of the wisdom to enjoy. In striving to take advantage of others, he has overreached himself. The strong hand of necessity will now force him into the path which conducts to that wisdom in which he has been so long deficient. He will discover the advantages to be derived from uniting in practice the best parts of the principles of barter and commerce, and dismissing those which experience has proved to be inconvenient and injurious."

A sort of commercial millenium is here manifestly implied; and the discussion of a plan of exchanges, which requires so radical a change in the morals of mankind, may with great safety be, for the present at least, postponed.

We are half ashamed indeed to go on with the analysis of a "Plan," of which so many of our readers will perceive the absurdity even at the first glance; but the countenance which it has received from a highly respectable body, must plead our excuse for continuing a little longer our quotations and remarks. Mr. Owen, indeed, takes care in general to save us the trouble of criticism, as the substantial parts of his dissertation, when separated from the verbiage which encumbers them, are commonly sufficient, upon a mere statement, to decide the matter. We shall, therefore, continue the course we have hitherto followed, and present this benevolent Reporter to our readers, speaking his own language, and developing his own views.

"The following heads," says the author, "form an improved practical system for the working classes, highly beneficial in whatever light it may be viewed to every part of society.

1st, The number of persons who can be associated to give the greatest advantages to themselves and to the community.

2d, The extent of the land to be cultivated by such association.

3d, The arrangements for feeding, lodging, and clothing the population, and for training and educating the children.

4th, Those for forming and superintending the establishments.

5th, The disposal of the surplus produce, and the relation which will subsist between the several establishments; and,

6thly, Their connection with the government of the country and with general society."

The author's decision upon the first point, is introduced with great pomp and solemnity. "To consider under what limitation of numbers, in individuals should be associated to form the first nucleus or division of society," is said to be "one of the most difficult problems in the science of political economy"—"it affects essentially the future character of individuals, and influences the general proceedings of mankind"—"it is, in fact, the corner-stone of the whole fabric of human society"—"it would require a work of many volumes to do justice to it"—"to form any thing resembling a rational opinion on the subject, the mind must steadily survey the various effects which have arisen from associations which accident has hitherto combined in the history of the human species; and it should have a distinct idea of the results which other associations are capable of producing." "and, finally, it has cost the author many years of deep and serious reflection." The result of so much profound meditation, is, that "with reference to an improved spade cultivation, and to all the purposes of society," 300 men, women, and children, form a fit minimum, and 2000 a proper maximum for the author's agricultural villages; the best range by far, however, being between 8 and 12 hundred to be united into an agricultural community, "on the principle of united labour, expenditure, and property, and equal privileges!"

The author has a special antipathy to that class of persons whom he calls "closet theorists," and whom he accuses of having "separated the workman from his food," in the midst of which he determines to replace him. The meaning of this is, that his agricultural communities are to have "manufactures as an appendage;" it being one of Mr. Owen's discoveries that the division of labour retards, instead of accelerating, the progress of wealth. He proposes that his rural manufacturers should hold from one half to one and a half acres of land each; and "it follows," "that land under the proposed system of husbandry, would be divided into farms of from 150 to 3000 acres; but generally perhaps from 800 to 1500 acres,"—a division which is to "give all the advantages without any of the disadvantages of small and large farms." The dwellings of the cultivators are to be chosen as near as possible "to the land." There are to be no such nuisances as courts, alleys, lanes, or streets: the buildings are to form "a large square, or rather, a parallelogram," a form to which the author has an especial attachment; and there are to be sleeping and sitting apartments looking across gardens—a spacious common-kitchen and dining-parlour—a school-house and chapel for public worship. In a line across the centre of the parallelogram we are to have an inn, infirmary, &c.—the whole forming a "general domestic arrangement, the advantages of which can only be known and appreciated by those who have had great experience in the beneficial results of extensive combinations in improving the condition of the working classes, and whose minds, advancing beyond the petty range of individual and party interests, have been calmly directed to consider what may now be attained by a well devised association of human powers for the benefit of all ranks."

Then follows a passage in a loftier strain, and which, as it affords a key to the author's whole system, we shall give at length.

"It has been, and still is, a received opinion among theorists in political economy, that man can provide better for himself, and more advan-

tageously for the public, when left to his own individual exertions, opposed to, and in competition with his fellows, than when aided by any social arrangement, which shall unite his interests individually and generally with society. This principle of individual interest, opposed, as it is perpetually, to the public good, is considered, by the most celebrated political economists, to be the corner stone of the social system, and without which, society could not subsist. Yet when they shall know themselves, and discover the wonderful effects which combination and unity can produce, they will acknowledge that the present arrangement of society is the most antisocial, impolitic, and irrational, that can be devised; that, under its influence, all the superior and valuable qualities of human nature are repressed from infancy, and that the most unnatural means are used to bring out the most injurious propensities; in short, that the utmost pains are taken to make that which by nature is the most delightful compound for producing excellence and happiness, absurd, imbecile, and wretched. Such is the conduct now pursued by those who are called the best and wisest of the present generation, although there is not one rational object to be gained by it. From this principle of individual interest have arisen all the divisions of mankind, the endless errors and mischiefs of class, sect, party, and of national antipathies, creating the angry and malevolent passions, and all the crimes and misery with which the human race has been hitherto afflicted. In short, if there be one closet doctrine more contrary to truth than another, it is the notion that individual interest, as that term is now understood, is a more advantageous principle on which to found the social system, for the benefit of all, or of any, than the principle of union and mutual co-operation. The former acts like an immense weight to repress the most valuable faculties and dispositions, and to give a wrong direction to all the human powers. It is one of those magnificent errors (if the expression may be allowed) that when enforced in practice, brings ten thousand evils in its train. The principle on which these economists proceed, instead of adding to the wealth of nations or of individuals, is itself the sole cause of poverty; and, but for its operation, wealth would long ago have ceased to be a subject of contention in any part of the world."

This is succeeded by a tirade about a new science, of which the author seems to think he has laid the foundation. This is "the science of the influence of circumstances over the whole conduct, character, and proceedings of the human race," which is followed by a bitter invective against the petty views of all parties, Whigs and Tories in Britain—Liberals and Royalists in France—Illuminati in Germany, &c. &c. who cannot, it seems, even imagine the mighty changes which Mr. Owen proposes.

"No!" says he, "the change sought for must be preceded by the clear development of a great and universal principle, which shall unite in one, all the petty jarring interests, by which, till now, human nature has been a most inveterate enemy to itself. No! extensive, nay, rather universal as the re-arrangement of society must be, to relieve it from the difficulties with which it is now overwhelmed, it will be effected in peace and quietness, with the good will and hearty concurrence of all parties, and of every people. It will necessarily commence by common consent, on account of its advantages, almost simultaneously among all civilized nations; and, once begun, will daily advance with an accelerating ratio, unopposed, and bearing down before it the existing systems of the world. The only astonishment then will be that such systems could so long have existed."

Under the new arrangements which will succeed them, no complaints of any kind will be heard in society. The causes of the evils that exist, will become evident to every one, as well as the natural means of easily withdrawing those causes. These, by common consent, will be removed, and the evils, of course, will permanently cease, soon to be known only by description."

And again,

"Your Reporter has stated, that this happy change will be effected through the knowledge which will be derived from the science of the influence of circumstances over human nature. Through this science, new mental powers will be created, which will place all those circumstances that determine the misery or happiness of men under the immediate controul and direction of the present population of the world, and entirely supersede all necessity for the present truly irrational system of individual rewards and punishments—a system which has ever been opposed to the most obvious dictates of common sense and of humanity, and which will be no longer permitted, than while men continue unenlightened and barbarous. The first rays of real knowledge will show, to the meanest capacity, that all the tendencies of this system are to degrade men below the ordinary state of animals, and to render them more miserable and irrational. The science of the influence of circumstances over human nature, will dispel this ignorance, and prove how much more easily men may be trained by other means to become, without exception, active, kind, and intelligent,—devoid of those unpleasant and irrational feelings, which for ages have tormented the whole human race. This science may be truly called one whereby ignorance,

poverty, crime, and misery, may be prevented, and will indeed open a new era to the human race; one, in which real happiness will commence, and perpetually go on increasing through every succeeding generation. And although the characters of all have been formed under the existing circumstances, which are altogether unfavourable to their habits, dispositions, mental acquirements, and happiness; yet, by the attainment of this new science, those of the present day will be enabled to place themselves, and more especially the rising generation, under circumstances so agreeable to human nature, and so well adapted to all the acknowledged ends of human life, that those objects of anxious desire, so ardently sought for through past ages, shall be secured to every one with the certainty of a mathematical procedure."

The minute subdivision of labour, and the predominant belief that private interests are best promoted by individuals without reference to the public good, form the chief blots upon the character of what this author calls "old society," or society as it now exists, and as contrasted with the new form which it is to put on, under the guidance of Mr. Owen, even in the intermediate stage which he condescends at present to delineate. The first step towards the happy change contemplated by this benevolent gentleman, is the introduction into this rustic communities of the practice of eating and drinking together in society. Of the effects of this change upon the present solitary and unsocial system, he draws a very flattering picture. "If to partake of viands so prepared, says he, served up with every regard to comfort, in clean, spacious, well-lighted, and pleasantly ventilated apartments, and in the society of well-dressed, well-trained, well-educated, and well-informed associates, possessing the most benevolent dispositions and desirable habits, can give zest and proper enjoyment to meals, then will the inhabitants of the proposed villages experience all this in an eminent degree."—The author proceeds after this "to describe the interior accommodations of the private lodging-houses, which will occupy three sides of the parallelogram;" but we cannot follow him into these privacies.—"Food and lodging being thus provided for, the next consideration, says he regards dress; and here he is very learned and elaborate, knowing the prejudices he must overcome before he can succeed in substituting his Highland nudities for the present dresses—which he pronounces to be "a certain proof of the low state of intellect among all classes of society." Perhaps the Celtic society may give him their aid on this interesting occasion—and "the new villagers, having adopted the best form and material of dress, permanent arrangements will be made to produce it with little trouble or expense to any party; and all further considerations respecting it will give them neither care, thought, nor trouble for many years, or perhaps centuries."

These smaller matters may be dispatched with little care. We now advance to that branch of his subject which this worthy author pronounces "the most important part of the economy of human life, with reference to the science of the influence of circumstances over the well-being and happiness of mankind;" and by which he says he can "produce among the human race, with ease and certainty, either universal good or evil!" This is the subject of *Education*.

On this subject, says Mr. Owen, how much has been written in vain!—But this author has at last penetrated the mystery, and has succeeded where Plato, and Aristotle, and Milton, and Locke, *et hoc genus omne*, have failed. The key to Mr. Owen's system is a proposition, which we think we may have heard before, viz. that the mind of man is just what it was made by nature, and by circumstances acting upon it from without—which impressions," says he, "combined with their natural qualities, whatever fanciful speculative men may say to the contrary, do truly determine the character of the individual through every period of life!"—But the use to be made of his discovery by Mr. Owen will probably astonish most persons. He is prepared," he says, "when others can follow him, so to combine new circumstances, that real vice, or that conduct which creates evil and misery in society, shall be utterly unknown in these villages, to whatever number they may extend." For this purpose he is to form two schools in each of his communities—for this author is ever laudably minute—the one for infants from 2 to 6, the other for children from 6 to 12.—But the principles of the proposed system of education are every way new and important.

"One of the most general sources of error and of evil in the world," says Mr. Owen, "is the notion, that infants, children, and men, are agents governed by a will formed by themselves, and fashioned after their own choice"—and "human nature," he adds, "up to this period, has been misunderstood, vilified, and savagely ill-treated." He challenges mankind to refute his doctrines on this point, and "is satisfied that the venerated wisdom of old society will fail in the attempt."—He knows that principles as certain as those upon which the science of mathematics is founded, may be applied to the forming of any given general character; and that by the influence of other circumstances, not a few individuals only, but the whole population of the world, may in a few years be rendered a very far superior race of beings to any now upon the earth, or which has been made known to us by history."

The first thing to be done is to abolish book-learning universally, and to substitute for it a system of instruction "by sensible signs," by which the pupils will not only acquire valuable knowledge, but the best habits and dispositions. The second thing is to place the dwelling-houses near the centre of the land; the third, to have the gardens adjoining them, but outside the parallelogram: the fourth, to have the said gardens bounded by the principal roads: the fifth, to have beyond them the workshops, with an intervening plantation: the sixth, to make the whole members of the community take their turns in the workshops, the gardens, and the fields; which will perfect this great system of education; and put an end, in the words of the author, to "poverty, ignorance, waste of every kind, universal opposition throughout society, crime, misery, and great bodily and mental imbecility;" and for the first time in the history of the world, give to man "any pretensions to the name of a rational being."

"His physical powers," proceeds the author, "may be equally enlarged in a manner as beneficial to himself, as to those around him. As his strength increases, he will be initiated in the practice of all the leading operations of his community, by which his services, at all times, and under all circumstances, will afford a great gain to society, beyond the expense of his subsistence, while, at the same time, he will be in the continual possession of more substantial comforts and real enjoyments, than have ever yet appertained to any class in society. The new wealth which one individual, by comparatively light and always healthy employment, may create under the arrangements now proposed, is indeed incalculable. They would give him giant power, compared with those which the working class or any other now possesses. There would at once be an end of all mere animal machines, who could only follow a plough, or turn a sod, or make some insignificant part of some insignificant manufacture, or frivolous article, which society could far better spare than possess. Instead of the unhealthy pointer of a pin,—header of a nail,—piecer of a thread,—or clothopper senselessly gazing at the soil, or around him, without understanding or rational reflection, there would spring up a working class full of activity and useful knowledge, with habits, information, manners, and dispositions, that would place the lowest in the scale many degrees above the best of any class which has yet been formed by the circumstances of past or present society. Such are a few only of the advantages which a rational mode of training and education, combined with the other parts of this system, would give to all the individuals within the action of its influence."

The author very naturally supposes that, in order to obtain so many advantages, every class of society will gladly co-operate, and that there can be no difficulty, of course, in forming his new establishments. Landed proprietors, large capitalists, trading companies, parishes, and counties,—nay, farmers, mechanics, and tradesmen themselves, will voluntarily unite to furnish the means of making so promising an experiment. There may be some little difficulty at first, he admits, in finding fit Superintendents; but this difficulty, too, will give way, since no more is necessary than that men should be sought, "who, in addition to a practical knowledge of gardening, agriculture, manufactures, the ordinary trades, &c. &c. can comprehend the principles on which these associations are formed, and, comprehending these, can feel an interest and a pleasure in putting them into execution,—very simple and ordinary qualifications to be sure!—To the difficult question as to the government of these societies, it would be impossible to do justice in any other language than that of the author.

"The peculiar mode of governing these establishments will depend on the parties who form them. Those founded by land-owners and capitalists, public companies, parishes and counties, will be under direction of the individuals whom these powers may appoint to superintend them, and will of course be subject to the rules and regulations laid down by their founders. Those formed by the middle and working classes, upon a complete reciprocity of interests, should be governed by themselves upon principles that will prevent divisions, opposition of interests, jealousies, or any of the common and vulgar passions which a contention for power is a cert in to regenerate. Their affairs should be conducted by a committee composed of all the members of the association between certain ages—for instance, of those between thirty-five and forty-five—or between forty and fifty. Perhaps the former will unite more of the activity of youth with the experience of age, than the latter; but it is of little moment which period of life may be fixed upon. In a short time, the ease with which these associations will proceed in all their operations, will be such as to render the business of governing a mere recreation; and as the parties who govern, will, in a few years, again become the governed, they must always be conscious that, at a future period, they will experience the good or evil effects of the measures of their administration. By this equitable and natural arrangement, all the numberless evils of elections and electioneering will be avoided. As all are to be trained and educated together, and without distinction, they will be delightful companions and associates, intimately acquainted with each other's inmost thoughts. There will be no foundation for disguise or deceit of any kind; all will be as open as the hearts and feelings of young children before they are trained (as they necessarily are under

the present system) in complicated arts of deception. At the same time, their wholesome conduct will be regulated by a sound and rational discretion and intelligence, such as human beings, trained and placed as they have hitherto been, will deem it visionary to expect, and impossible to attain, in every-day practice.

"The superior advantage which these associators will speedily possess, and the still greater superiority of knowledge which they will rapidly acquire, will preclude, on their parts, the smallest desire for what are now called honours and peculiar privileges. They will have minds so well informed—their power of accurately tracing cause and effect will be so much increased, that they must clearly perceive, that to be raised to one of the privileged orders, would be to themselves a serious evil, and to their posterity would certainly occasion an incalculable loss of intellect and enjoyment, equally injurious to themselves and to society. They will, therefore, have every motive not to interfere with the honours and privileges of the existing higher orders, but remain well satisfied with their own station in life. The only distinction which can be found of the least utility, in these associations, is that of age or experience. It is the only just and natural distinction; and any other would be inconsistent with the enlarged and superior acquirements of the individuals who would compose these associations. The deference to age or experience will be natural; and readily given; and many advantageous regulations may be formed in consequence, for apportioning the proper employments to the period of life best calculated for them, diminishing the labour of the individuals as age advances, beyond the term when the period of governing is concluded."

Mr. Owen's communities are of course to create "a much larger amount of wealth at a greatly reduced expenditure;" and "the next question is, In what manner is the produce to be disposed of?"—Mr. Owen's answer is—By extinguishing all selfishness whatsoever—by creating wealth, so as to exceed every want of man—by destroying, in consequence, the desire to accumulate, and the motives to deceive—by selling commodities at what the author calls "prime cost," or the value of the labour expended upon them—by introducing "a principle of equity and justice, openness and fair-dealing," into all the communities—and finally, by freely permitting each individual to receive from the general store of the community whatever he may require!"—"It may be safely predicted," says Mr. Owen, "that one of these new associations cannot be formed without creating a general desire throughout society to establish others, and that they will rapidly multiply." And no wonder, when we consider the miracles they are to work, that he should hazard such a prediction. They are all to be animated by the very best sentiments—to raise and manufacture the very best commodities, and so forth; and it is quite plain, therefore, that there will thus be "a perpetually extending market, or demand for all the industry of society, whatever may be its extent," and that, "under such arrangements, what are technically called 'bad times,' can never occur."—The communities are to have granaries, to guard against want; and "a proper representative of the value of labour," to enable them to carry on their commerce; but there are, of course, to be no forgeries; and "courts of law, prisons, and punishments would not be required, these being requisite only where human nature is greatly misunderstood—where society rests on the demoralising system of individual rewards and punishments,—but quite superfluous where "the science of the influence of circumstances" is profitably cultivated.—The taxes are to be paid by the new communities, in "the legal circulating medium;" and to obtain this medium, they must just sell the quantum of their surplus to "common society." The members of the new communities will be admirably adapted, of course, for war, as for every thing else, when such an emergency occurs; but the "science of the influence of circumstances" will soon put an end to this insane occupation throughout the world.

Mr. Owen then triumphantly, and with no small share of contempt for the ignorance and imbecility of his fellow men, of all classes and denominations,—Concludes that the subject thus developed, is new both to theorists and practical men. The former being ignorant of the means by which extensive arrangements, when founded on correct principles, can be easily carried into execution, will at once, with their usual decision, when any new measures at variance with their own theories are proposed, pronounce the whole to be impracticable, and undeserving of notice. The others, accustomed to view every thing within the limits of some particular pursuit, as agriculture, or trade, or commerce, or manufactures, or some of the professions, have their mind so warped in consequence, that they are for the most part incapable of comprehending any general measures, in which their peculiar trade or calling constitutes but a small part of the whole. With them, the particular art or employment in which each is engaged, becomes so magnified to the individual, that, like Aaron's rod, it swallows up all the others; and thus the most petty minds only are formed. This lamentable compression of the human intellect, is the certain and necessary consequence of the present division of labour, and of the existing general arrangements of society.

So far, however, from the measures now proposed being impracticable, a longer continuance of the existing arrangements of society will speedily appear to be so; as one and all now reiterate the cry that something must be done.

"Your Reporter begs leave to ask, if this 'something,' to be effectual for the general relief of all classes, is expected to come from the mere agriculturist, or the tradesman, or the manufacturer, or the merchant, or the lawyer, or the physician, or the divine, or the literary man—or from Radicals, Whigs, or Tories? or from any particular religious sect? Have we not before us, as upon an accurately drawn map, most distinctly defined, all the ideas and the utmost bounds, within which this exclusive devotion to particular sects, parties, or pursuits, necessarily confines each mind? Can we reasonably expect any thing, resembling a rational 'something,' to relieve the widely extending distress of society, from the microscopic views which the most enlarged of these circles afford? Or rather, does it not argue the most childish weakness to entertain such futile expectations? It can never be, that the universal division of men's pursuits can create any cordial union of interests among mankind. It can never be, that a nation which necessarily separates, in a greater or less degree, every human being from his fellows, can ever be productive of practical benefits to society.. This notion, as far as our knowledge extends, has ever been forced on the mind of every child, up to this period. Peace, good will, charity, and benevolence, have been preached for centuries past; nay, for thousands of years, yet they no where exist; on the contrary, qualities the reverse of these, have at all times constituted the character, and influenced the conduct, of individuals and of nations, and must continue to do so, while the system of individual rewards and punishments is permitted to constitute the basis of human society."

Such is an impartial analysis of this "Plan" of Mr. Owen's upon which it would be superfluous to make any comments, after the extracts we have already given. We respect, as much as any one, the benevolent views of this gentleman; but we must say it distinctly, that the structure of his intellect has raised our unfeigned wonder. We have never heard of a projector, who contemplated plans so extensive, with a stock of wit and ingenuity so very small—who has shewn so little of invention and of plausibility in the construction of his Utopia. Every thing is clumsily assumed, and taken for granted by him; his superstructure is indeed immense to the imagination, but is not only baseless, but without even an ingenious apology for the want of all foundation, Mr. Owen cannot be said to jump to his conclusion, for there is no elasticity whatever about him; he sets out with it, and sticks fast to it from beginning to end of his discourse. He has no idea of the proportion of means to ends—and vainly imagines that at the simple touch of Mr. Robert Owen, ignorance and misery are to be dispelled like clouds before the march of the sun. He wages a sort of Bobadil warfare with the ills of life; and at the close of 60 quarto pages, has them all fairly exterminated.

To be serious, however, we must take leave to ask this gentleman, what are the precise means by which he proposes to work so many miracles; for we profess that, after the most diligent perusal of his Report, we have found absolutely nothing that is new in point of expedient or suggestion. There are many obvious radical errors throughout—and errors, too, which shew Mr. Owen's total unfitness for the task he has undertaken. It is manifest, for example, to every one, that he knows nothing whatever of the doctrines of exchange, circulation, or of the general principles which govern production and consumption, upon which he has so pleasantly dogmatized;—not to speak of the yet deeper and more important mistakes which he commits in all questions of a moral nature,—and especially on the subject of rewards and punishments. There is nothing, so far as we can see, peculiar to Mr. Owen's plan, except the parallelogramic buildings, with the pleasant gardens attached; and we have no doubt that Mr. Owen is quite competent to decide upon such details, from his own experience, and with a view to such manufacturing establishments as that over which he presides with so much advantage. But the other parts of his scheme, such as that which regards Education, are quite common-place and familiar,—while the expectations entertained of them are the most extravagant that can will be imagined. We have no doubt that the active zealous benevolence of this gentleman is such as to give great efficiency to any arrangements that may be adopted for the improved comfort and intelligence of the working classes attached to any great manufacturing establishment, and just as little, that the details of education and of moral discipline, as they exist even in this country, are yet susceptible of very great improvement. But that the whole system admits of being changed in any beneficial manner, or that, from the slender commonplace means suggested by Mr. Owen, any such result is to be expected as the banishment of poverty, vice, and misery—in short, the moral and physical perfection of the species—is so utterly extravagant, that we know not well in what terms of compassion to express ourselves of such a projector. Mr. Owen, in little matters of local arrangement, is, we believe, intelligent and respectable; but in philosophy he is less than nothing—he is a negative quantity.